LEGO NINJAGO

DRAGONS RISING

THE NEW HEROES

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THE NEW HEROES

By Stacia Deutsch

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INTRODUCTION

When Mergequakes rattled Ninjago and the outside realms, the known world changed in unexpected ways. In schools, in the dragon lands, and even in the wilderness, everyone is struggling to adapt to a new reality. Change is never easy.

Sora recalls a time when she was young and idealistic. She had an idea for a science project that would get her recognition by the Imperium leaders, but nothing turned out how she expected.

A dragon named Riyu is playing in the meadow near his home when the hunters arrive. Can he outsmart the enemies who are there to capture him?

A Caregiver-bot and a human child are stranded in the Wyldness. A how-to manual for raising a kid provides the only guidance for the Caregiver, until the child becomes friends with a dragon.

Turn the page to check out these three brand-new Ninjago adventures. . . .

THE BEST PETS

Sora and Arin stretched out on the rooftop where they lived, high above the Crossroads. They were celebrating the nice weather by sleeping under the stars.

Arin rolled onto his side to look at his friend. "Can I ask you a question?"

"Sure," Sora said. She continued to stare at the stars. "Ask me anything."

Arin tugged up his thin blanket and asked, "What were you doing before the Merge?"

When the sixteen realms had suddenly merged into one, the entire world had changed. Arin had told Sora hundreds of times what life

was like before his family disappeared. But she'd barely shared anything about herself. He knew she'd been a mech-racer, that she loved technology and was great at building things from bits and baubles they found, but other than that—nothing.

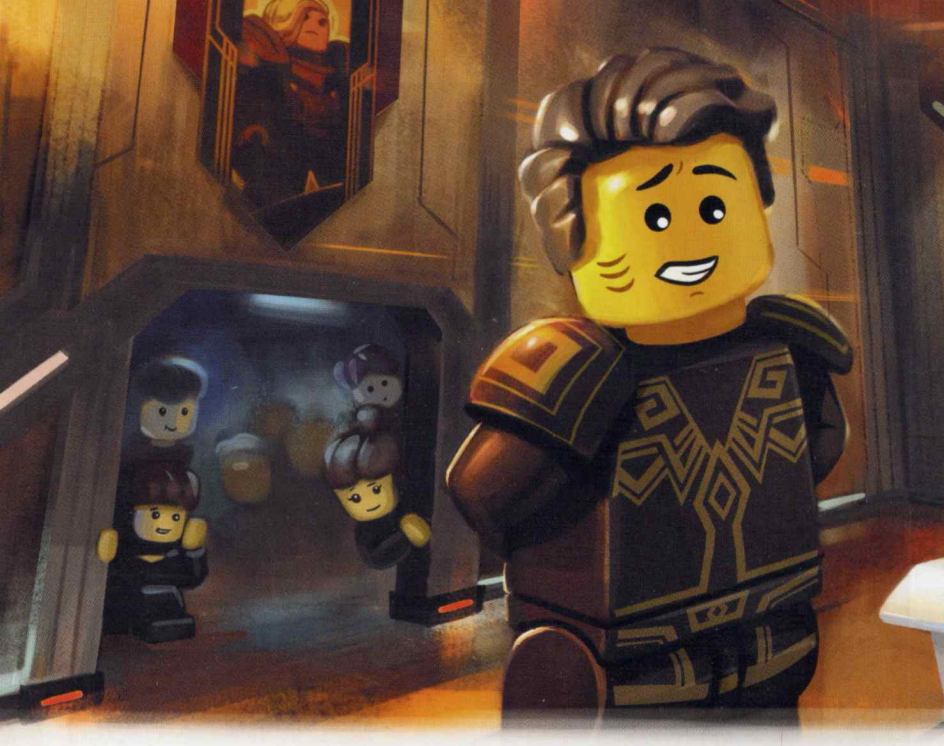
"Hmmm . . ." Sora yawned. "I'm tired, Arin. Let's leave this for another day."

"You said you'd answer," Arin protested.

"I only said you could ask," Sora replied. "I didn't say I'd answer." She rolled over. Seconds later, she began to snore.

"You're impossible!" Arin harrumphed, but a minute later, he was sound asleep.

Sora, however, was only pretending to sleep. Arin's question rolled around in her head, bringing memories from her past. What *was* she doing before the Merge? Well . . . she'd been an inventor in Imperium. And back then, nobody had called her Sora. She was Ana.



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"Ana." Mr. Koenig, her teacher, stepped up to her desk. "Tell me about your project."

Ana whipped out her plans. She was thrilled to talk about them. Her friends were tired of hearing every detail, and her parents didn't understand. "My Photac Animal is going to be cuddly," Ana explained. "It won't require food and will be hypoallergenic."

"Interesting proposal for the school fair," Mr. Koenig replied. "But I don't think—"

"Want to know the best part?" Ana interrupted. She didn't wait for the teacher's reply. "The hard light never deteriorates, so it can't be hurt, or grow old. Everyone will want one. I'm going to make a kitten first."

"You know we mustn't deviate from the curriculum," Mr. Koenig warned. "Empress

Beatrix doesn't like kittens." He added in a soft mutter, "Or ponies. Or bunnies."

"I'm certain that she's gonna love this cute little kitty!" Ana promised. "After the fair, I plan to show my work to Dr. LaRow at Imperium Advanced Systems Lab."

"Alas, I don't know what Dr. LaRow thinks about cats." Mr. Koenig sighed, glancing at the door. There was a commotion in the hallway. He had to go see what was happening, so he said, "All right, Ana, but proceed with caution."

"I'm always careful!" Ana called out as her teacher rushed off.

The truth was Ana had been working on her project for months. She was far ahead of the other students. She pulled a small black cube out of her bag and powered it up.

A fuzzy yellow kitten emerged as the light molecules forged together. "Hello, Glitch," Ana said. She'd come to call the cat Glitch because for some reason, parts of it faded in and out. She never knew when she powered

up the light box if the kitten would have two ears, or more. It usually started with four legs, but sometimes one of them would suddenly fade away. Whiskers weren't always on the cat's face. There was a problem, a glitch, in the programming.

"I'll fix it!" Ana always told herself.

She entered a new code into her program. "This is promising," she said as the cat's fourth leg appeared to set correctly. But a second later, Glitch's front two legs morphed into wings. "Interesting. I've never seen an animal like this one before!" She chuckled. "I wonder how Empress Beatrix feels about cat-birds."

She talked herself out of trying to pass it off as a new species. "I'll try the kitty again." But before Ana had a chance to type in a new code, the strange hybrid creature took off. It smashed through a window and flew away.

"Not good!" Ana grabbed her bag and ran out the school door. "Where are you, Glitch?!"

"Ana, what's going on?" Dr. Koenig came outside and found her on the lawn, staring at the sky.

"Nothing, no problem. Glitch didn't escape, if that's what you were worried about," she said.

"I . . . What?" Dr. Koenig began.

Suddenly, Ana heard it.

"Merp." It was a meow-chirp. *"Merp. Merp."*

"Gotta go!" Anna shouted to her teacher before running off to follow the merps. They led her to her house!

She pushed open the front door.

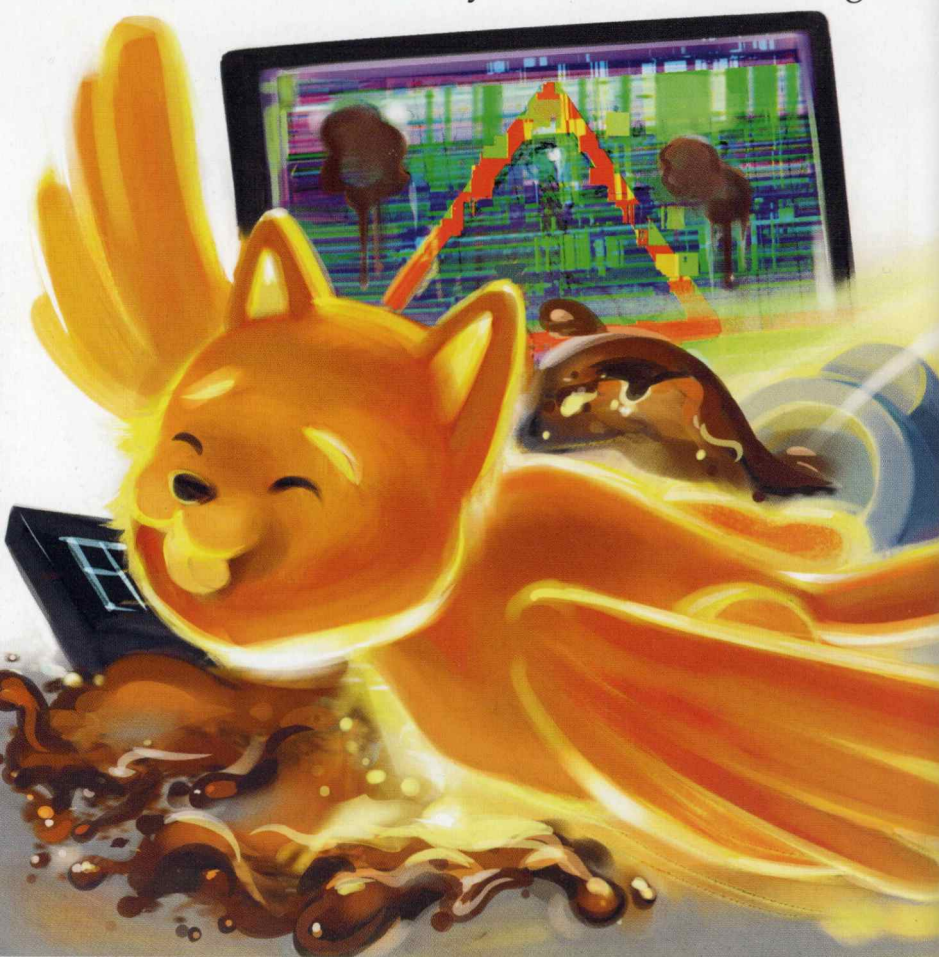
"AUGHH!" Ana's father was sitting at his desk, pointing at Glitch, who had crashed through another window. "It's a monster!"

"Get it off me!" Her mother wept as Glitch nested in her neatly combed hair.

"Come, Glitch," Ana commanded. She had to get close enough to the light box to shut down the program. The cat-bird ignored her. She tried again. "Here, here, little Glitchy."

Ana's mom pushed Glitch off her head with a heavy *umph*. He leapt away, landing gracefully on her father's desk before skittering across the computer keyboard and changing the text on the screen.

"Nooo! Shoo . . . or fly away!" Her father screamed. The cat-bird yawned before knocking



a nearby cup of coffee onto the keyboard. The computer made a wild whizzing noise. Then the screen faded to black.

"We're all doomed," her father moaned.

"Sorry," Ana said, finally getting close enough to the cat-bird to shut its program down.

All she ever wanted to do was make her parents proud, but that was hard sometimes.

Ana reset the circuitry on her invention, and a minute later, the cat-bird disappeared. To Ana's surprise, a black-and-white puppy suddenly emerged from the light box. "Aren't you an adorable mistake!" Ana gushed.

The puppy yipped playfully. It had two rows of shark teeth, but Ana was encouraged. "I'll call you Glitch Number Two!" she exclaimed. Mr. Koenig hadn't said anything about Empress Beatrix not liking puppies!

"That's the scariest dog I've ever seen," her mother said.

"Terrifying," her father agreed.

"I'll fix it!" Ana assured them. Inventing was difficult, but she'd get the Photac Animals right. She'd be ready for the school fair, and Empress Beatrix would be charmed. Dr. LaRow would invite her to the Academy.

"Nothing else will go wrong," she promised her parents as she gave Glitch Number Two a treat and led it upstairs to her room. She needed to work on the puppy's teeth right away. . . .

***

On the rooftop over the Crossroads, Sora stared at the stars. She had more memories from Imperium, but they were not quite as as pleasant as that one. She had a feeling that sooner or later, her Imperian past might somehow cause trouble here. She also knew that whatever trouble the future might bring, this time, with Arin's help, she really would fix it all.

FROGS, BEES, AND DRAGON HUNTERS

Riyu, come home before dark! The Matriarch's voice sounded loud and stern in Riyu's head. The dragon leader used telepathy to talk to the members of her clan and to anyone that she would choose to communicate with.

There are strangers in the woods, she cautioned. *We don't know what they are looking for.*

I heard the scouts, too, Riyu replied. Since Riyu was too young to hunt or fly, he often sat at the Matriarch's feet when she had important meetings with other grown-up dragons. *I'll be back before dinner.* Before rushing away, Riyu added, *I promise.*

Although he often went on exploring adventures, Riyu had only been to the meadow

once before. Now the thick green pasture was lush and dotted with sweet-smelling flowers. He settled down in a patch of purple blooms and was surprised when a buzzing bee flitted around his head and landed on his nose.

New friends! Riyu thought as a second bee landed next to the first.

Oh . . . Soon there were hundreds of bees. They settled on his head, his back, and even his small wings. Riyu was covered with bees, and the sound of buzzing filled his ears.

Let's chase! Riyu gave a mighty roar. He stood and rushed forward, challenging the bees to keep up.

As he dashed through the meadow, more bees joined the game, and soon they were so thick around him that Riyu could barely see. He tripped, crashing through a thorny bush and rolling down a grassy hill. Riyu didn't stop until he flopped face-first into a muddy stream!

The young dragon wiped mud from his eyes. The bees zoomed away, and now the frogs wanted to play.

"*RIBBIT,*" said the frogs.

Ribbit, Riyu answered.

The frogs jumped up and down and Riyu bobbed along. After a while, Riyu took a teasing swing at them with his wing. The frogs dodged safely into the mud, but Riyu lost his balance and tumbled forward, flopping down into the water. Chuckling, he got to his feet and shook off the droplets.

The sun had begun to set. When Riyu started toward home, the nearby sound of laughter caught his attention. He decided to investigate.

A group of humans wearing protective helmets were sitting around a fire, chatting and laughing.

Riyu snuck closer to find out more. These had to be the strangers that the scouts had reported seeing, but they didn't seem dangerous. Riyu

wondered if, like the bees and the frogs, they could be friends.

"I feel lucky," a woman said cheerily. "We're going to catch a dragon tonight."

The strangers are dragon hunters! Riyu thought. *They are not friends!*

Riyu needed to go home. He needed to warn the Matriarch. Backing away quietly, he accidentally stepped on a tree branch.

CRACK!

"Look there! It's a dragon!" a voice called out. "Get the cage!"

Cage?! Oh, no! Riyu dashed away as fast as he could. The hunters followed.

When he got back to the meadow, the fastest two hunters were right behind him. Riyu had an idea. He stopped and, with his heart racing, sat down in the purple flowers.

Just as they had before, the bees came. When the first helmeted hunter, a woman, got close enough, Riyu raced toward her.

Do you see that woman? he asked his buzzing friends. *She wants to play with you!*

The bees happily moved from Riyu to the hunter. But when she saw the swarm flying toward her, she screamed and quickly ran away. The bees followed, thinking she wanted to play tag.

The second hunter now entered the meadow. He was carrying a net on a stick. "I'll get the dragon!"

Riyu knew what to do. He hurried toward the water and called to the frogs: *Ribbit! Come play!*

"RIBBIT!" The frogs jumped out of the mud.

Riyu pointed at the man. *He likes games.*

The frogs hopped toward the stranger. He stopped, not sure if the army of little green creatures wanted to eat him or trample him.

"Go away!" the man shouted before tumbling into the muddy stream. He swam to

shore and emerged dripping wet. "I quit!" He tossed down his net and stomped away.

Whew. Riyu thought he was safe, but just then, the hunters carrying the cage entered the meadow!

"Rapton, why can't we fly on our speeders?" one of the men called over his shoulder.

Riyu couldn't see the man called Rapton, but the voice he'd heard earlier replied, "It's a surprise attack. Do you know what 'surprise' means? You have to be sneaky."

"You're on a noisy Hover Chariot," a woman whined.

"The cage is heavy," a man groaned.

"My arms hurt!" another man added.

"I'm the leader," Rapton said, emerging from the trees. He was wearing shades over his eyes. "No resting! We're the Imperium Claws! We catch dragons! I want that dragon!"

"Get him yourself," the man with the sore arms said. "We're taking a break."

All the people carrying the cage set it down.

The woman hunter turned to the others and asked, "Who brought the cookies?"

This is my chance to get away! Riyu hurried out of his hiding spot and headed toward the mountains.

"There he is! Get him!" Rapton ordered his troops.

Grumbling, the hunters tossed aside their cookies and tea.

Where are you, my bee friends? Riyu called out. The bees came. But this time, when he told them to swarm the strangers, they refused. They hadn't liked playing with Helmet Woman. She was dull. Riyu was more fun. They encircled him and refused to be shaken away. Covered in bees, Riyu stumbled to the muddy stream.

Frog-friends! he called, and the frogs began jumping. When he asked the frogs to play with the strangers, they also refused. They liked playing with Riyu the best!

Surrounded by bees and blocked by jumping frogs, Riyu couldn't see where he was going. He tripped and splashed into the water. Loud ribbits and buzzes echoed in his ears.

Riyu didn't hear the clang of the cage door until it was too late! When the air cleared, Riyu was trapped. The cage was suspended in the air by drones that followed Rapton's Hover Chariot.

"The surprise attack worked! *I* captured the dragon!" Rapton cheered.

"*You* didn't capture anything," the strangers on the ground cried. "We did all the work."

"But *I* have him!" Rapton laughed. "See you in Imperium!" With that, he revved the Hover Chariot and the drones rose higher, carrying Riyu into the evening sky.

The hunters started the long walk home.

Riyu frowned. *I won't come home before dinner. . . . But this isn't over,* he thought. He looked down through the cage screen. The bees and the frogs buzzed and croaked apologetically.

It's all right, Riyu assured them. *You're good friends. I'll be back to play with you soon.*

He looked toward Rapton, who was hunched over his vehicle's controls. *I will make more friends,* Riyu declared, *and together, we will stop you from catching dragons!*

THE CAREGIVER FILES

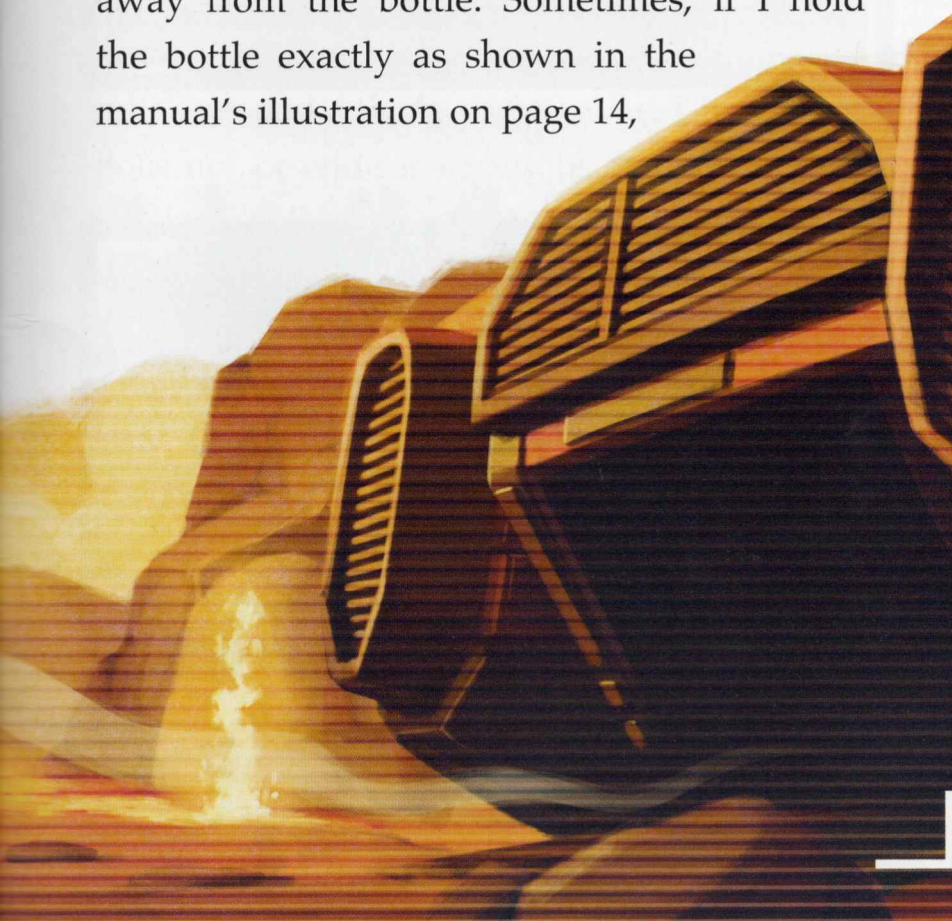
Caregiver Files

» The subject is a child in my care. Following our escape from the host planet, I have vowed to raise the youngling according to structure set forth in the official childcare manual called *The Robo-Sense Guide to Baby and Child Care*, First Edition, Exceptional NannyBot Publications.

Log 368-NW

» The human baby refuses to follow the schedule in the official childcare manual. On page 12, it clearly says that every two hours, the baby will eat, burp, then need a diaper change. After that, she will nap.

» This child refuses to eat. She turns her head away from the bottle. Sometimes, if I hold the bottle exactly as shown in the manual's illustration on page 14,



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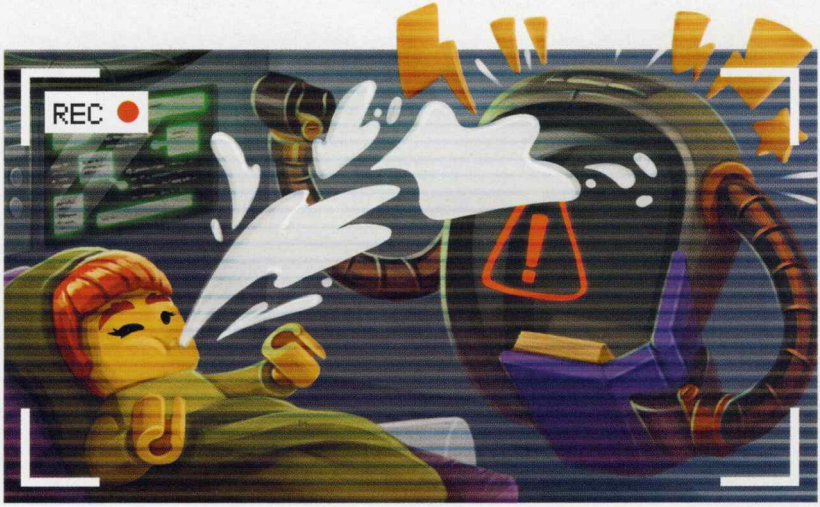

REC

she will sip a little, but then she spits the milk at me. My circuit board sparks upon impact. The fiery flickers bring her great delight.

» Instead of burping, she gurgles and presses the buttons on my chest. I beep. I whiz. Occasionally, I make coffee.

» When my alarm sounds, it's time to change her diaper.

» I remove the dirty diaper. She immediately rolls over and quickly scoots away. The manual does not provide instructions for capturing a stubborn child who is fleeing into the Wyldness.

» Once I get the new diaper secured, it is always past the scheduled nap time. The child screams and screams until my alarm sounds again.

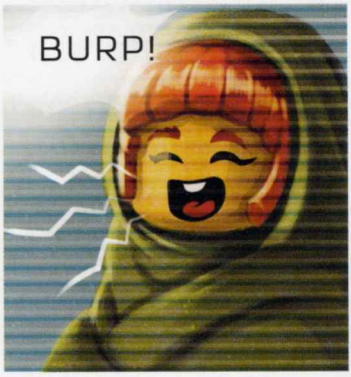
» I return to page 12 of the manual, review the schedule, and begin the process again.

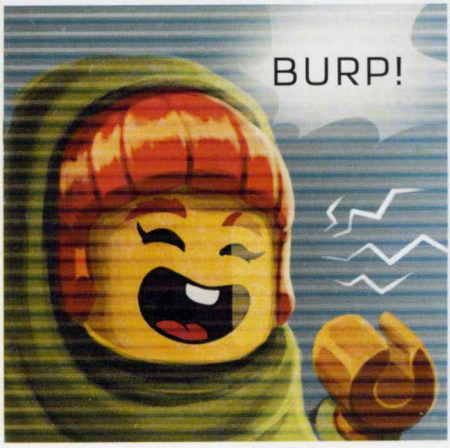
» *The Guide to Baby and Child Care* was written by Caregiver experts and therefore must be accurate. It is the child, I worry, who is flawed.

» And yet . . . when she eventually falls asleep, I am awed by her soft breaths and her sweet face. She is perfect.

Log 1095-NW

» The toddler has finally discovered burping. Unfortunately, it's not only after meals, as the manual describes in the early stages of life. She





BURRRP!

burps all day long. Loud, rowdy, extended burps—always with an echoing roar!

» In response, I recite to her the "Pathway to Politeness" from page 976. *"A child should: Sit quietly at meals. Use the correct utensils according to the diagram. Finish her milk. Dab the corners of her face with a napkin. Ask to be excused from the table. Always offer thanks to the Caregiver."*

» This morning at breakfast, the toddler tore the "Pathway to Politeness" page from the manual and ate it (without utensils). She burped so loud that nesting birds scattered. Then she spilled her milk and ran away from me. The child climbed a tall tree and tossed down a melon. Then she fell out of that tree. I didn't know what to do, and there wasn't time to consult the manual.

» A dragon saved her!

» The child returned to me and declared that from now on, she will eat only melons. (The manual says nothing about melons.) Then, declaring the meal "over," she put her napkin on her head and wore it as a hat.

» I have begun to accept that the Caregiver's instruction manual might not apply to raising this child. I will adapt and adjust in my caregiving.

Log Note: Before I entered this report, the child appeared and kindly thanked me for

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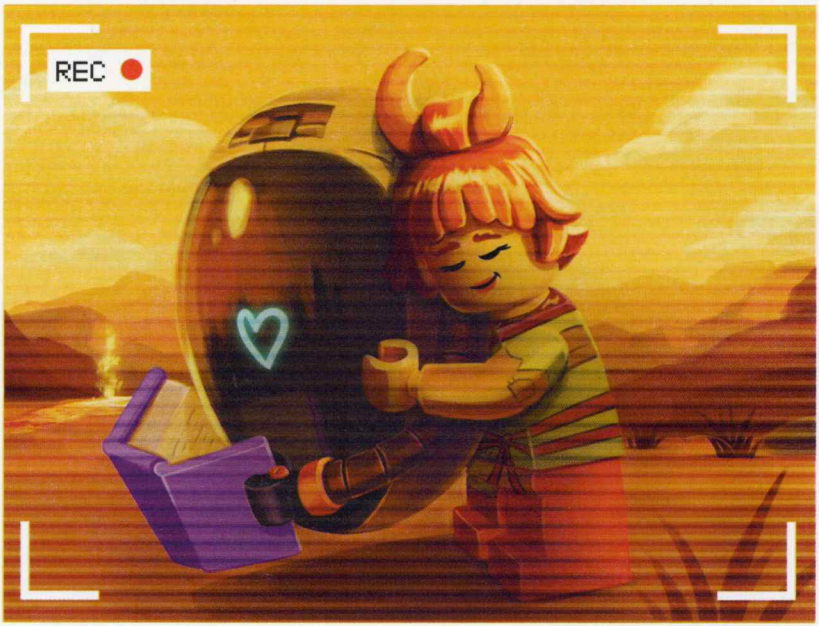


breakfast, in accordance with page 976. But then she leapt forward and gave me a hug, which was a surprise, as hugging is not covered in the manual.

» However, immediately afterward, she burped, laughed, and skittered away to spend the morning with Heatwave, her dragon friend and savior.

Log 2190-NW

» The child has an amazing ability to pick up language and find the right words to argue with me.

» She says that she loves fire.

» I warn her that fire is dangerous. It burns. It destroys.

» She insists that fire warms. It provides light. Fire cooks our food.

» She says she loves riding on the back of Heatwave.

REC

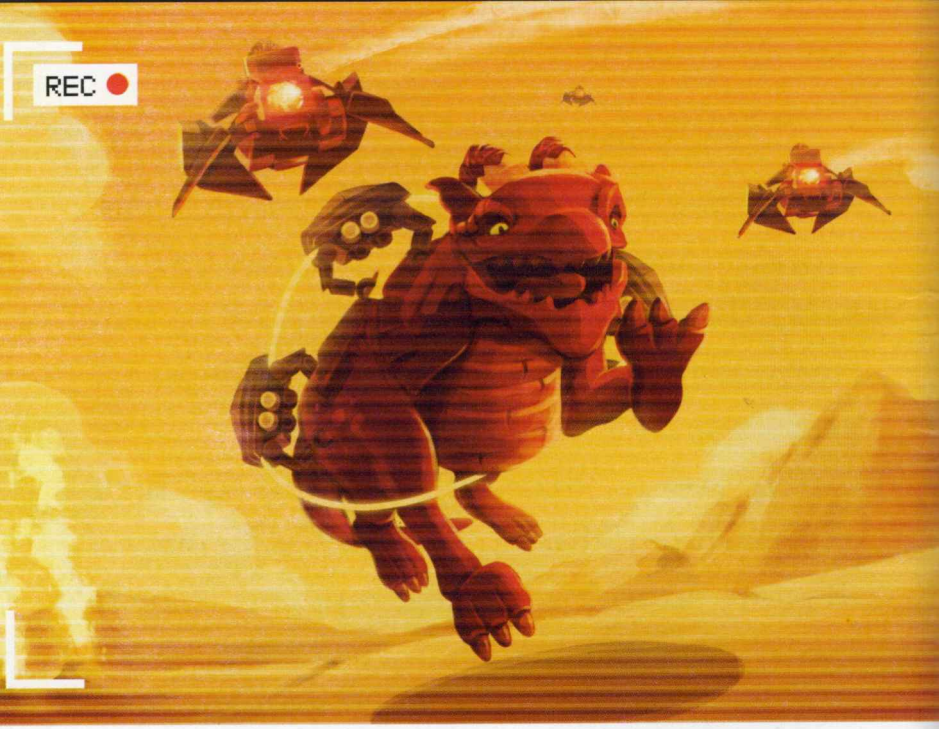
» I tell her that dragons are unpredictable. I show her the pictures in the manual and explain that they can toss a rider off its back. The manual also says it is possible that Heatwave will get hungry and decide to eat her as a snack.

» She replies that dragons can fly high and warn of dangers. She teaches me how a dragon's scorching breath can protect us both. The child proclaims that Heatwave is her friend and will never eat her as a snack.

» I wave the official childcare manual, but she shoves it aside.

» The child wants to be called Wyldfyre. The name suits her. She loves danger.

» I know the time has come for me to let her explore the world. I must allow her to learn and grow. From today forward, I will put away *The Robo-Sense Guide to Baby and Child Care*. It is of no use to us anymore.



Log 4280-NW

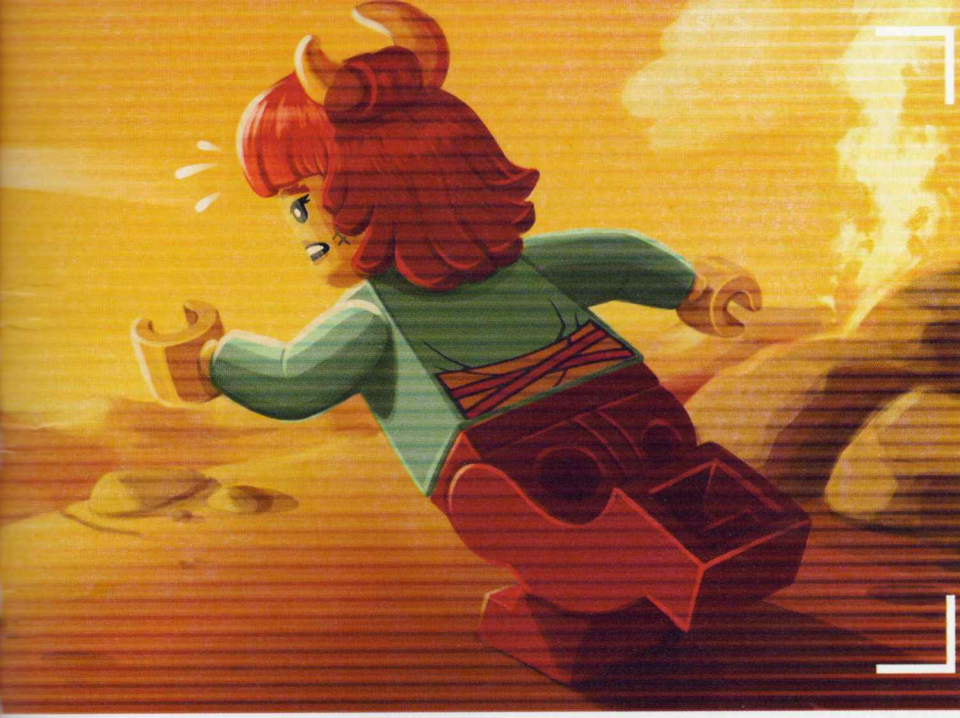
» ERROR. ERROR. ERROR.

» Wyldfyre is leaving my care.

» ERROR. ERROR. ERROR.

» Heatwave has been snatched by dragon hunters. They are taking him to Imperium. Wyldfyre insists she must follow the hunters. She says that she will rescue her dragon friend.

» ERROR.



» Wyldfyre cannot leave.

» When we escaped our planet, I promised to raise the youngling. I understand by data input alone that she is no longer young, but my mission does not feel complete.

» There remains an unknown variable: What does a Caregiver do without a child to care for?

» I ran the question through my programming and instantly received a reply: *Does not compute.*

What am I supposed to do if the data does not compute?! I will repeat the query later.

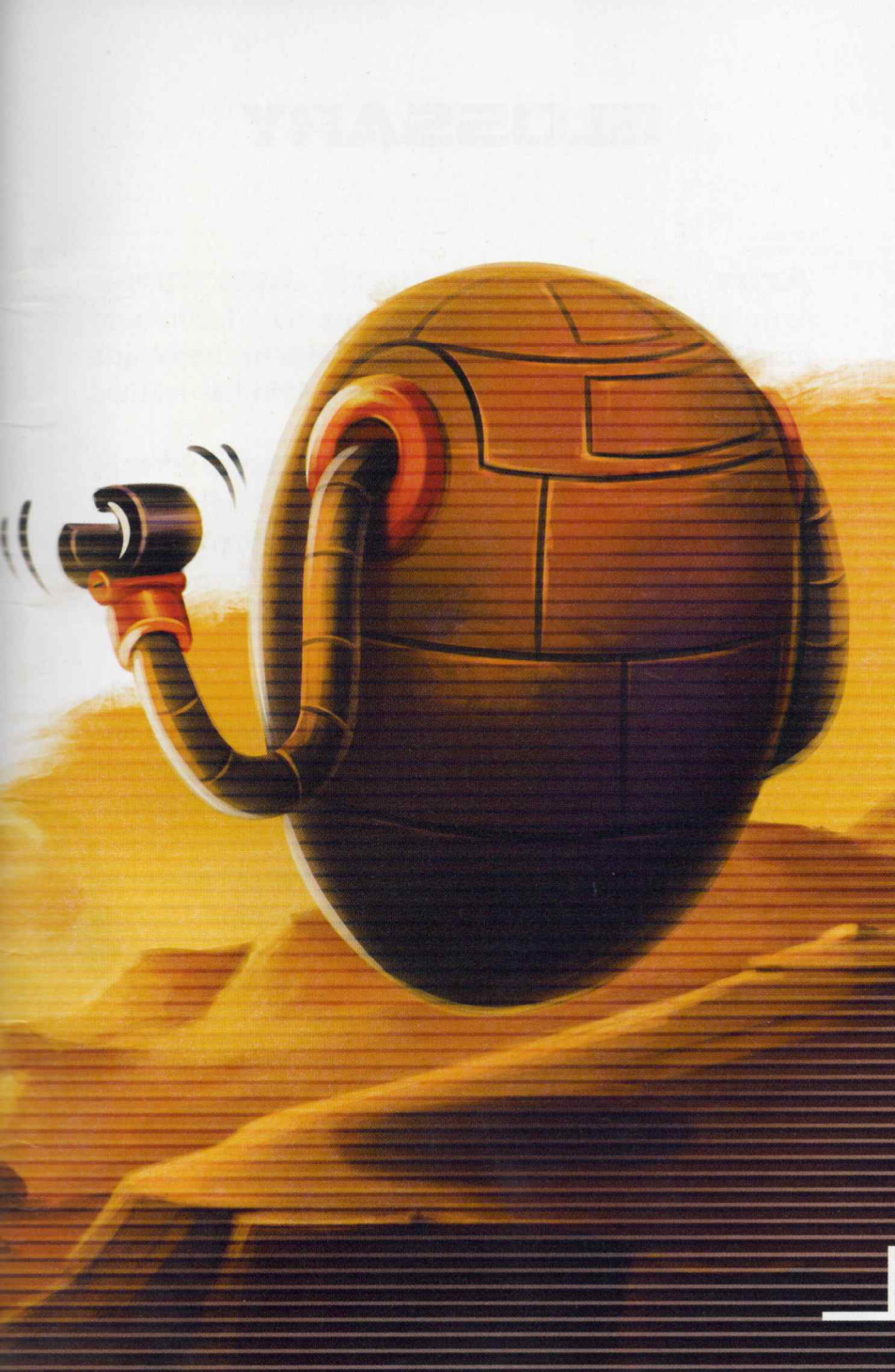
» Before leaving our home, Wyldfyre came to me. Her bag was packed for an indefinite journey. We stood face to face. Shoulder to shoulder. I handed her the baby bottle and shared what I have learned:

- Eat when you're hungry.
- Sleep when you are tired.
- Burp loudly and with joy.
- Eat many melons.
- A napkin can also be a hat.
- Fire provides warmth, light, and protection.
- Always be your Wyld-self.

» The manual no longer exists, and still, Wyldfyre thanked me. She hugged me, and I hugged her back.

» Now she has gone on to her next adventure. I am certain that she will retrieve Heatwave and be successful in her task.

» There is no longer a reason for me to stay here. I want to learn more about these lands. Perhaps I will write my autobiography while I travel. It could be called *Diary of a NannyBot*.



GLOSSARY

Arin
Arin is a superfan of the ninja team who has taught himself a rough form of Spinjitzu. Since his home and family disappeared after the Merge, Arin has teamed up with Sora.

Caregiver
She is a nanny robot who rescues Wyldfyre from her home planet. As Wyldfyre grows, the nanny also becomes more aware of her own AI abilities.

Crossroads
This neighborhood outside Ninjago City was the epicenter of the Merge. It's a giant melting pot of people, cultures, and architectural styles from all united realms.

Dr. LaRow
This head of Imperium Advanced System's Lab is Imperium's most famous scientist and a national hero to its people.

Empress Beatrix

This is the leader of Imperium after the Merge. Empress Beatrix is in control of everything that goes on under her watchful eye.

Heatwave

For Wyldfyre, this dragon is not only her best friend, but also her family. After Heatwave saves her from falling, the two are inseparable. But when he's captured by the dragon hunters, it's up to Wyldfyre to save him.

Hover Chariot

This is a small one-seated aircraft. The Imperium Claws use Hover Chariots to move quicky through merged realms.

Imperium

Ruled by proud Empress Beatrix, the kingdom of Imperium is a technologically advanced city-state that united with the world of Ninjago along with other realms after the Merge.

Imperium Claws

The dragon hunters are officially called Imperium Claws, and though they try hard, they are not always skilled at their jobs.

The Matriarch

She is the leader of the dragons, a queen who provides safety, comfort, and resources for survival.

Merge

This mysterious and violent event resulted in the Ninjago world uniting with the legendary outside realms.

Mergequakes

These are aftershocks of varying strength that continue to affect the united world, often causing chaos and destruction.

Mr. Koenig

Ana's teacher, Mr. Koenig, wants what's best for his students, within the limits of Imperium laws. He encourages Ana to use her abilities but cautions her about going too far.

Photac Animal

The Photac Animal is Ana's school science fair invention. It's a pet made of hard light that doesn't require care and will always be there for its owner. Ana hopes this invention will catch the attention of Dr. LaRow and get her invited to the Academy.

Rapton

The leader of the Imperium Claws, he loves the attention when he brings a dragon to Empress Beatrix. Rapton will do whatever it takes to return home a hero.

Riyu

This young dragon craves independence and adventure. Riyu leaves the safety of the Matriarch only to be captured. In time, Riyu will hook up with the ninja and find a special connection in their ranks.

Sora

Her real name is Ana. She loves technology, and since her childhood days in Imperium she's proven to be as a talented inventor. Seeking a fresh start in the Crossroads after the Merge, she met Arin on her path. If Arin is the heart of their duo, Sora is the brains.

Three Peaks

This is the home of the dragons, away from the merged world's urban areas. Here dragons are safe from the Imperium Claws and anyone else who wants to capture them.

Wyldfyre

She grew up in the Wyldness with her Caregiver-bot and her dragon friend. She has fire powers, which will likely make her an elemental master.

LEGO NINJAGO

DRAGONS RISING

NEW HEROES, NEW VILLAINS, AND NEW WORLDS COLLIDE IN THIS FULL-COLOR CHAPTER BOOK, FEATURING THREE ACTION-PACKED STORIES!

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